

INDIANA

STATE WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN



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FOREWORD

A letter from our director.

Indiana's fish and wildlife play a vital role in the improved quality of life for all Hoosiers. The Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) is tasked with the responsibility to professionally manage Indiana's fish and wildlife for present and future generations on both private and public lands. The vast majority of Indiana's lands are privately owned. The DNR recognizes we will achieve greater success in our goal to conserve fish and wildlife resources through collaboration and continued partnerships with private landowners and conservation organizations.

Congress also has recognized the importance of partnerships and integrated conservation efforts, and has charged each state and territory in the country to develop a State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP) by October 2015 as an update to the Comprehensive Wildlife Strategy (CWS) from 2005.

In the development of the SWAP, the DNR contacted over 950 interested professionals throughout the state and region to create a network of technical experts and on-the-ground natural resource managers. The SWAP is a reflection of those partnerships and ongoing collaboration of conservation organizations to increase habitat and landscape scale benefits and to focus on common goals identified within the SWAP.

Conservation doesn't just happen. It requires resources and collaboration. The SWAP is a habitat-based plan to benefit all Indiana fish and wildlife including Indiana's Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN). Game species have long benefitted from federal funding through the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs (hunter and angler funded). For nearly eight decades, these DNR programs have had great success in managing game species and providing hunting and fishing opportunities for Hoosiers. To achieve similar conservation success for wildlife species that are not hunted or fished, a permanent, stable funding base is required, both from federal sources and state matching funds. This action plan is a necessary step toward that goal and receiving the federal funding associated with State Wildlife Grants. As a member of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, DNR will work with other states and our partners to establish and maintain the level of support required to implement the SWAP.

Hoosiers have always worked together to build the future, whether in manufacturing, agriculture or wildlife conservation. Remembering that a wise tinkerer keeps all the parts, we intend to conserve all our natural resources to sustain economic development and contribute to quality of life for our citizens and visitors.

With a rich base of conservation partners contributing and shaping the SWAP, we know this plan has something to offer every Hoosier willing to work towards conservation in the state. We are grateful to those who helped create this guiding

document for habitat and SGCN conservation in Indiana and invite all Hoosiers to help us continue to move forward. Join us as we use this plan to guide programs and initiatives that will conserve wildlife for your grandchildren and beyond.

We believe in Hoosier heart and ingenuity. We look forward to working with all our partners to ensure the future of our critical natural resources on which all fish, wildlife, and Hoosiers depend.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Cameron F. Clark".

Cameron Clark
Director, Indiana Department of Natural Resources